SUGAR LAND 2005 PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN



Executive Summary Draft

January 2005

Prepared by:

CARTER & BURGESS, INC.

Consultants in Planning, Engineering, Architecture,
Construction Management, and Related Services
777 Main Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
(817) 735-6000

Market Research By: National Research Service 6300 Ridglea Place, Suite 1011 Fort Worth, Texas 76116 (817) 731-3493

Recreation Programming By: OATS, LLC

1032 Stonecreek Dr. Lawrence, Kansas 66049 (785) 842-0091

013096.010



The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (PROSMP) is a comprehensive planning effort that examines the existing issues and recommends future endeavors for park land acquisition, recreational program needs, and for both new facilities and renovation of existing. The goal of the Plan is to provide a road map for Parks and Recreation to better address the needs of the citizens of Sugar Land. There was extensive input received by citizens through a ten-member task force, public meetings, focus group meetings, a citizen and teen written survey, as well as multiple review and comment opportunities by the 7 member Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The Plan's recommendations and priorities are citizen input driven.

This plan has a point of reference beginning with the PROSMP that was adopted in 1996. The 2005 Plan considers the accomplishments of the City from 1996-2004 and provides guidance for the next 5 to 10 years. The 2005 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan focuses on the following issues:

- Identifies gaps in service and facilities and recommends ways to address the gaps
- Includes demographic data to project population growth and its impact on parks and recreation needs
- Guides the City for future land acquisition targets to meet future needs
- Provides recommendations based on citizen input yet also cross references this input with national and regional park standards
- Considers recreational facilities and programs offered by private sector providers and by homeowner associations to avoid duplication of services
- Provides guidance to assist in securing grant funds for park and recreation improvements
- Guides City staff and City leaders in determining where and how parks funding should be allocated over the next 5-10 years

Purpose of the Plan

The City of Sugar Land, and its ETJ areas, are growing at a rapid pace. The community is very unique in the amount of private recreation areas that have been developed, and will continue to be planned. As development and population numbers increase, the demand for quality parks, leisure services, facilities and open spaces will also increase.

In 1996 a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan was prepared jointly by Clark Condon Associates of Houston, Texas and MHS Planning and Design of Tyler, Texas. The purpose of that Plan was to guide the City of Sugar Land in the decision making process, assist in the implementation of those decisions, and set guidelines for future development. A majority of the recommendations from that Plan have been met, including:

- Acquire and develop 108 acres along Oyster Creek in the vicinity of Lost Creek Park
- Develop additional facilities at City Park
- Acquire 400+ acres along the Brazos River for a future regional park
- Construct picnic pavilions at Highlands Park and Ron Slockett Park
- Construct hike/bike trails throughout the community
- Eldridge Park
- Sugar Lakes Park
- Acquire Gannoway Lake Property
- Improvements at First Colony Park

In 2000, after realizing a 158 percent increase in population since 1990, the comprehensive plan was identified as the highest priority project by City Council and a strong community role was deemed critical to its success. The process took





approximately two years to complete. The Council set guiding principles to kick off the process, and that list received public input at a community summit. The principles were then handed to a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, made up of community representatives in the City and extraterritorial jurisdictions, formed for the purpose of drafting the goals, objectives, and strategies. City Council passed ordinance 1396 (adopting a new Chapter 5 — Goals, Objectives and Strategies) on February 4, 2003.

Goals are identified as broad statements of a qualitative nature that provide a general vision and guide. They endure over time and are statements, which can allow a significant amount of flexibility in policy and actions.

The following thirteen goals have been identified by the City of Sugar Land:

Goal One: Preserve and enhance a beautiful City that is clean, safe, and aesthetically pleasing; a city that will foster pride and appeal to our citizens, corporate community, and visitors.

Goal Two: Promote a vibrant, diversified economy that enhances the quality of services while maintaining a competitive tax rate.

Goal Three: Achieve a balanced and orderly use of land that will preserve and enhance the quality of life within Sugar Land while developing a diverse and sustainable city.

Goal Four: Promote redevelopment in harmony with the surrounding community.

Goal Five: Provide a multi-modal transportation system that economically accommodates the convenient, efficient, and safe movement of people and goods while working to maintain neighborhood integrity.

Goal Six: Provide and maintain quality infrastructure and facilities that ensure high levels of service while accommodating growth. Goal Seven: Expand the corporate limits of the City in a prudent manner while considering the long and short-term impacts.

Goal Eight: Operate, maintain, and develop the airport's infrastructure, balancing airport needs with the needs of the community while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Goal Nine: Provide a park system that meets the total recreation and leisure needs of the community. Identify, protect, and preserve open spaces and critical natural areas.

Goal Ten: Provide and/or support activities and facilities that enrich the artistic, cultural, educational, and historical character of Sugar Land.

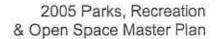
Goal Eleven: Preserve, protect, and enhance natural, historical, cultural, and architectural features.

Goal Twelve: Provide equal opportunity and encourage participation of all citizens in the economic, social, and civic life of the community, while recognizing racial, cultural, religious, age, and individual differences in this diverse community.

Goal Thirteen: Continue to refine and expand the vision of Sugar Land as a dynamic guide for the future.

As identified in goal number nine, the City of Sugar Land recognizes the contribution that a well-balanced park system makes to the quality of life in a community. The following objectives have been developed to meet this goal:

- The City should identify the desires and needs of the community to provide and establish the appropriate programs, services, land use, and facilities for the City.
- The City should develop a Recreation Services/Programming Plan for the City.
- The City should update the Parks Master Plan.





- The City should continue to seek, maintain, and utilize open space designed for both passive and active recreation.
- The City should optimize the potential of the Brazos River Corridor as a premier, natural destination for the City and the region.
- The City should develop and promote cooperative partnerships in an effort to provide and maintain park and recreational opportunities.
- The City should actively identify and seek funding opportunities for park facilities and program operations, through alternative funding sources. (i.e. grants, sponsorships, partnerships, etc.)
- The City should plan, provide, and maintain a safe, secure, and efficient park system.
- The City should actively identify facilities, programs and events that meet the needs and desires of its culturally diverse community.

The City selected the consultant team of Carter & Burgess, Inc., National Service Research and Oats, L.L.C., to prepare an update to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. Through an interactive process involving the citizens of Sugar Land, the Parks and Recreation Department and City Council, this updated Master Plan provides direction for future land acquisition, park development and expansion, and recreation programming to meet the needs of the growing population in the Sugar Land community.

The purpose of this project is to develop a Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan which covers the city limits, as well as the ETJ of the City of Sugar Land. The plan addresses present and future parks, recreation and open space needs covering a time for a minimum of five years to a maximum of ten years.

The plan includes, but is not limited to the following:

 Ensure that people of all interests, age groups and abilities, have access to the

- recreational, cultural and leisure facilities of their choice
- Coordinate the provision of City recreational facilities and programs with other providers (e.g. schools, semi-private organizations, outside providers, private developers, etc.)
- Encourage appropriate public involvement in Parks and Recreation Department activities and programs
- Establish priorities and statements of direction based on researched and documented facts and a community based needs analysis
- Identify and implement financial, regulatory and other mechanisms to support development, operation and maintenance of the parks and open space system
- Conform to the preparation guidelines for local Master Plans as prepared by the Texas Parks and wildlife, for the Texas Recreation and Parks Account local park grant program.

This document outlines the methods, results and recommendations of the Master Plan study and is intended to be used as a guide for future Park, Recreation and Open Space development within the community of Sugar Land.

Creating a Parks and Recreation Department Vision – The Visioning Process

In order to develop a unified approach to the future, a vision was created that defines a preferred future and philosophy for the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department. The Consultant Team conducted a Visioning Workshop with the Park and Recreation staff that incorporated several important aspects such as history, values, themes, trends, partnerships, key issues, amenities and barriers in developing a vision statement, a mission statement, broad goals, and objectives. All decisions throughout the Parks and Recreation Department should support these.



VISION STATEMENT

The Community Of Choice For Excellence In Parks And Recreation

MISSION STATEMENT

Create enjoyment for the community by providing quality leisure services through recreation opportunities while protecting and preserving the integrity of our facilities and natural resources of our parks for future generations.

Goals Statements

Enhance Community's Trust Through Increased Visibility

- Improve agency identity
- Be recognized as park and recreation experts
- Identify and implement beneficial recreation innovations

Create PARD Policies and Procedures

- Develop a business plan
- Develop a Park Maintenance Plan
- Create Service Standards
- Develop customer feedback process

Maximize Utilization Of Community Resources

- Create equitable partnership agreements
- Identify and provide appropriate needed facilities
- Create equitable use of facilities



METHODOLOGY

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan was prepared using a two-phase process. Phase 1 involved base map preparation, inventory/supply analysis, population analysis, standards analysis, program analysis/alternate providers, and community input process. Phase 2 involved the prioritization of needs/recommendations, expenditure analysis, action plan and final report.

The Master Planning Process

A Phase I

Step 1 - Base Map Preparation

Prepare a computer generated base map from digital data provided by the City of Sugar Land. Illustrate information such a streets, buildings, drainage corridors, vegetation, park sites, school sites, municipal facilities, city limits, ETJ limits, etc.

Step 2 - Inventory/Supply Analysis

Tour park and recreation facilities with City Parks and Recreation staff. Prepare inventory, based on information provided by City Staff, of all parks and facilities owned by the City, all HOA parks and facilities, public and private school facilities and private recreation providers.

Step 3 - Population Analysis

Analyze demographic and population characteristics of the community. Concentrate on factors of age, gender, education, ethnicity, median income and projected population changes.

Step 4 - Standards Analysis

Determine park classifications and acreage guidelines which apply to the community. Compare existing facilities against standards to determine acreage and facilities required to meet present and future needs of the community. Benchmark the City of Sugar Land against four comparable cities within Texas that have similar characteristics. Compare and analyze Sugar Land against peer cities.

Step 5 – Program Analysis/Alternate Providers

Utilizing recreation programming information provided by the city, analyze and evaluate core programs vs. non-core programs. marketing and market share, capacity utilization, program life cycles, program facilities, partnerships and sponsorships, ADA compliance and seasonal program capabilities. Utilizing non-profit and private programming/inventory recreation information provided by the city, analyze and evaluate location of facilities, programs participation levels, amenities provided, marketing efforts, current market share, partnership potential, hours of operation and target markets.

Step 6 - Community Input Process

Gather information from individuals, associations, clubs and organizations through public forums, focus groups and surveys to determine what types of facilities and recreation opportunities are desired by the citizens. Prepare final report including purpose, methodology, summary and conclusion. Identify citizen needs regarding recreation demand.

B. Phase 2

Step 7 – Prioritization of Needs/Recommendations

Based on citizen survey, Task Force Committee input, Parks and Recreation Board Input, City Council Input, and City Staff input, develop a prioritized list of facility needs. Develop recommendations to guide and direct the acquisition, development, and maintenance of parks, recreation and open space for the next five to ten years.



Step 8 - Expenditure Analysis

Prepare an expenditure analysis based on priority items and written recommendations, Step 9 – Action Plan

Prepare a ten-year action plan that provides specific priorities, location for development, budget estimates, sources of funding and a proposed time line.

Step 10 - Final Report

Prepare a final report that includes the following information: introduction, goals and objectives, process overview, acreage and facility standards, inventory, documentation of needs assessment process, prioritization of needs and recommended plan of action.



INVENTORY OF CITY OWNED PARKS AND FACILITIES

Sugar Land has a park system containing 896.30 acres of dedicated park land. Across this system is a wide spectrum of park facilities to serve the citizens. A profile of these facilities is presented below:

PARK LAND

11	Neighborhood Parks
6	Community Parks
2	Regional Parks

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

24	Baseball/Softball Fields
2.5	Basketball Courts
	(2 full courts)
	(1 half court)
1	BMX Track
6	Community Buildings
1	Community Center
14	Covered Picnic Shelters
2	Picnic Pavilions
16	Playgrounds
1	Pool
1	Skate Park
19	Soccer Fields
5	Tennis Courts
10.4	Trail Miles
9	Volleyball Courts

INVENTORY OF CITY OWNED TRAILS

Park Trails:

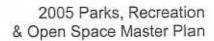
Highlands Park	0.3 miles
Colony Bend Park	0.3 miles
Meadow Lake Park	0.2 miles
Ron Slockett Park	0.4 miles
Sugar Mill Park	.25 miles
Sugar Lakes	.25 miles
Eldridge Park	.40 miles
Oyster Creek Trail	2.50 miles
SAME SOUND SHOWS SAME AND SAME	

Sub-total 4.60 miles

Hike & Bike Trails:

Lonnie Green Park to	22425 W
Ditch A22	.70 miles
Colony Grant Trail	1.00 miles
Sugar Mill along Ditch A-22	1.30 miles
Williams Grant/Grants Lake	
Austin Parkway	.60 miles
Chimney Stone	.15 miles
Woodstream	1.30 miles
Sugar Mill/Covington	.50 miles
Sub-total	5.55 miles

Total Trail Distance 10.15 miles





INVENTORY OF PRIVATE HOME OWNER'S ASSOCIATION FACILITIES IN CITY CORPORATE LIMITS

Park Land

39 Parks

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Trails

3

2 Baseball/Softball Fields (practice) Basketball Courts 2 Benches Fishing Piers 3 3 Gazebos Grills 1 Lake Meeting Rooms 5 Pavilions 7 Picnic Tables 30 Playground Restrooms 14 45 Swimming Pools 30 Tennis Courts

Volleyball Courts (sand)

INVENTORY OF HOME OWNER'S ASSOCIATIONS FACILITIES IN EXTRA TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION LIMITS

Park Land

16 Parks

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Trails

8

7	Baseball/Softball Fields (game)
1	Baseball/Softball Fields (practice)
2	Basketball Courts
14	Benches
2	Football Fields
1	Gazebo
1 2 9	Meeting Rooms
9	Pavilions
12	Picnic Tables
26	Playgrounds
6	Restrooms
9	Soccer Fields
20	Swimming Pools
30	Tennis Courts
~~	1.011110

Volleyball Courts (sand)

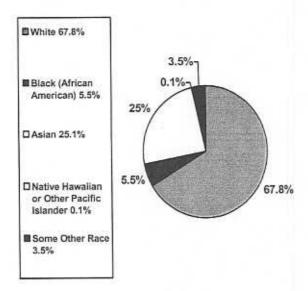


DEMOGRAPHICS ANALYSIS

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND DEMOGRAPHICS WITHIN CITY LIMITS (US 2000 Census)

The population of a community should be studied in a variety of ways for purposes of park planning. The design of services is based in part on consumption characteristics of the residents. The size and location of parks, schools and services (public and private) are based on the density and distribution of the population as recipients of these services. In order to assist in forecasting the future park and recreation needs of the City of Sugar Land, this section provided information and analysis on population trends and projections, racial composition, household size, age characteristics and educational attainment. (Based on 2000 Census Data)

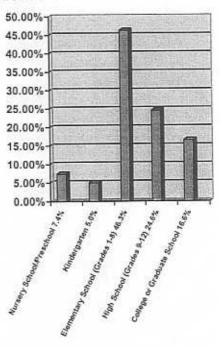
Ethnicity



Educational Attainment

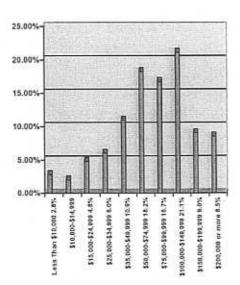
Less than 9th Grade	2.2%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	4.4%
High School Graduate	13.3%
Some College, No Degree	20.0%
Associate Degree	6.4%
Bachelor's Degree	34.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	19.3%

School Enrollment



Income in 1999







BENCHMARK SURVEY FOR THE CITY OF SUGAR LAND

INTRODUCTION

The consultant team and the City of Sugar Land Park and Recreation staff selected eight cities of similar size, location, and demographics to benchmark with the City of Sugar Land. The expectation was to get responses from four cities but all eight cities responded positively to fill the benchmark survey out and send it back to the consultants. The cities that responded to the benchmark survey are Frisco, TX; Grapevine, TX; Baytown, TX; Conroe, TX; Flower Mound, TX; Round Rock, TX; Irving, TX; and Plano, TX. All participating cities received a copy of the survey results in exchange for participating in the benchmark survey.

The benchmark survey questions were selected by the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation staff with the consultants providing a list of questions and components to select from while adding the most relevant questions. The responses as well as the benchmark survey are included in the report. Based on comparing Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department to the benchmark cities departments, the obvious discrepancies are highlighted in yellow. The highlighted issues indicate those areas where most or all of the benchmark cities survey numbers and answers deviate significantly from those at the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department.

SUMMARY

- The Sugar Land Parks and Recreation budget is significantly lower than most of the benchmark cities budgets.
- The number of Department FTE's and particularly the Parks FTE's are significantly lower than the benchmark cities FTE's.
- The Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department does not have an agreement with the School District as is the case with all the other benchmark cites. The City is currently in discussion with the district regarding new opportunities.
- The facilities that the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department do not operate like the benchmark cities include: Recreation

Center, Gymnasiums, Fitness Programming Rooms, Weight Rooms, Fitness Spaces, Arts Room, Racquetball Courts, Indoor Volleyball Courts, Indoor Basketball Courts, Leisure Pools, Competitive Pools, Youth Football Fields, Adult Softball Fields, and Environmental Education/Nature Center.

- Sugar Land Parks and Recreation has significantly less Outdoor Basketball Courts, Soccer Practice Fields, Baseball Practice Fields, and Fishing Piers than most of the benchmark cities.
- The leisure program areas that the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department do not offer like the benchmark cities include: Pre-School Classes, Outdoor Education Classes, Multi-Cultural Programs, Sports Programs, Teen Programs, and Educational Programs.
- Outdoor Education Classes are not offered in Sugar Land by another entity as it is in most of the benchmark cities.
- The City of Sugar Land does not maintain any Adult Softball or Adult Football fields or maintain the infields like many of the benchmark cities.
- The revenues the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department receives from the Athletic User Groups is significantly lower than most of the benchmark cities.
- Most of the benchmark cities promote through distributing flyers and the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department does not.



PROGRAM ANALYSIS

PURPOSE

The program analysis report was developed to analyze the current programs offered by the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department throughout the city. The report focuses on existing programs based on information provided by the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department staff. The intent of the program analysis is to assist the Parks and Recreation Department in identifying the program gaps within the community, identifying any duplication of programs with other recreational service providers in the community, identify existing ADA issues, and to assist in determining the future program offerings of the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department.

PROCESS

The consultants created a program assessment questionnaire for the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department staff to fill out on several program areas that they currently offer programs. The program areas included: Leisure Classes; Senior Programs; Day Camp; Open Gym; Athletics; Aquatics; and Special Events. The information from these questionnaires is included in the analysis report. The consultants have visited all the program sites, talked with the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department program staff, visited the other recreational service provider locations, and studied the information gathered. Each of the existing seven program areas has been analyzed to help determine the best use of resources to fulfill the recreational for future community needs programming.

OVERALL FINDINGS/OBSERVATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

The offerings of the current program areas of Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department are lacking in quantity and variety. The citizen survey results and focus group input demonstrates the public wants and is willing to support additional programming. Recreation programming could be the strength of the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department and

the citizens of Sugar Land should be able to count on the programs as well as the staff. Quality of the instructors and programs is key to every program area. A properly implemented User Fee Policy should create the ability to increase program offerings based on successful participation.

The availability of the facilities is limited and additional program space is needed to be able to offer the variety of programs the community needs and will support. The current community center meets ADA standards and the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department should implement an accessibility plan for programs to meet any needs of the public such as interpreters, sign language, Braille, etc. based on the participants responding to what their needs are. This can be done on an as needed basis for most programs if advertised in the program There is a need for a multi-purpose recreation center in the community to better serve the residents. An additional facility would also provide more capacity for programs at the times the working public can participate.

The Municipal Pool needs to be renovated to add to the programmatic value of the facility, to meet ADA standards, and to rejuvenate the attendance. The average life expectancy of any swimming pool is 20-25 years. A feasibility study for a leisure pool is recommended. A site analysis including demographics support, a conceptual plan with capital cost estimates and a projected operational pro-forma is recommended prior to determining the location and size of a recreation center.

It is also recommended that funding sources be identified for capital and operating expenditures for the recreation center. Additional programs will need some additional program staff so some of the program areas will have a dedicated full time staff person to program.



OTHER SERVICE PROVIDER ANALYSIS

PURPOSE/ PROCESS

The Other Service Provider Analysis report was developed to analyze the other entities in the Sugar Land market area that are offering recreational programs. Not all of the other service providers are located within the Sugar Land city limits. The report focuses on the other service provider information provided by the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department staff. The intent of the other service provider analysis is to assist the Parks and Recreation Department in identifying the duplication of programs within the community, identifying any program partnering opportunities with other recreational service providers in the community, and to assist in determining the future program offerings of the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department available to the public. A separate section lists the other reservation / rental providers in the Sugar Land market area.

OVERALL FINDINGS/OBSERVATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

This analysis provides the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation staff with a clear picture of what is being offered by other service providers as well as their current pricing of services. This gives the staff a benchmark, but it should not be the only guiding principle when offering programs. Other considerations should be the memberships, room rental rates, age segments, competition levels, exclusivity, location, and to whom the programs are being offered. The staff should consider all these elements to determine what programs should be offered.

The analysis of the information depicts several indicators that, if implemented at the City of Sugar Land, should increase the success level of programs and facilities. There is a community need for gymnasium space, multi-purpose program space, senior program space, rental space, and an outdoor leisure aquatic center. Most of these amenities can be built into one recreation/community center without detracting from the other service providers. There is not a need for any additional fitness facility or ice rink

although some niche fitness classes in a multipurpose recreational facility would be received well from the community.

Some of the other facilities cater to a membership clientele such as the homeowners associations, fitness facilities, private clubs, private golf courses, etc. The private fitness and golf courses sell annual memberships and the patron must sign a minimum one-year contract. The general public consensus is usually to pay as they go and not need to be a "member" at an additional cost to take part in recreational services. Many of the other facilities have an initiation or registration fee. This fee is a one-time fee that prevents members from dropping their memberships because they will need to pay the initiation fee to join again. These types of fees generally do not interest the vast majority of the public. It is recommended that if the City of Sugar Land builds a new recreation center, they should not have contracts and/or initiation/registration fees. Instead they should rely on the ease of participating and paving only for the programs and services in which they choose to participate.

Many of the facilities analyzed cater to a certain membership and are not viewed or perceived as being open to the public. The First Colony Community Association facilities are for the homeowners in their association and even though many Sugar Land residents are members of the HOA, there are many Sugar Land residents that do not live in the First Colony HOA. FCCA programs are open to everyone. The New Territory HOA has an early registration period for the New Territory residents and the remainder of the public can sign up after the HOA members and are also assessed a non-resident surcharge since they do not live in New Territory.

The Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department should program for all Sugar Land residents, regardless where they live and need to fill the program and facility gap for those residents that are not members of these other service providers. The community relies on public entities like the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department for recreational services that are available to everyone in Sugar Land. There are many homeowner associations that do not have programs and/or



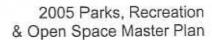


facilities for their members that need programs and facilities that are totally open to the public with access to everyone in Sugar Land. The Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department can fill this void within the community with affordable programs that require no "need to belong" to any associations.

The citizen survey indicates the vast community support for the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation to offer additional programming and build a recreation center to offer the programs. The Sugar Land Community Center is utilized primarily as a rental facility and is not adequate for evening and weekend programs. It is also not large enough to house the current senior activities.

Most of the other facilities do not partner with organizations for public programs within their facility. Partnering with other service providers for programming will enhance the opportunity for the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department as well as the partnering entity. The other service providers spend advertising dollars to get people into their facility, try a program, and become a returning customer. The Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Department can assist in offering some niche programs either at their facility or another facility, utilize their instructors and pay them through the program fees, and bring new participants that can sign up for additional programs or even become a member. The key is for the Parks and Recreation Department to operate "feeder" or "intro" programs and leave the intermediate and advanced programs to the other service provider that is an expert in that program area. An example of this is to partner with a private gymnastics club and offer tumbling for tots. After the participants finish the tumbling class, if the child liked the activity and wants to continue, they then sign up with the private gymnastics club since the Parks and Recreation Department does not have the equipment. Essentially, the "feeder" programs advertise and promote the private facility and the Parks and Recreation Department fulfills the need for any resident to try a program to see if they like it well There are many program enough to continue. opportunities for introductory level and "how to" programs that are totally open to the public, the participants only need to pay for the program costs, and the activity is conducted in a fun, recreational, and non-competitive atmosphere. There are also opportunities to find a niche market such as a specific

age group that certain programs are not offered for or a specific talent level that is missing. These niches can compliment rather than compete with the other service providers in the Sugar Land market area.





PUBLIC INPUT & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

National Service Research (NSR) completed a comprehensive research study for the City of Sugar Land, Texas as part of the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan. An important aspect of the Master Plan was to conduct a demand and needs assessment which involved citizen input. The purpose of the needs assessment study was to provide a foundation for the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan that will provide guidance based upon citizen needs and priorities. NSR worked closely with Carter & Burgess, Inc., the City of Sugar Land staff and task force members (comprised of community leaders appointed by city management to provide input and guidance throughout the master plan process) throughout the research process.

In order to complete this study effort, NSR held one public meeting on February 26, 2004, conducted two focus group sessions on March 31, 2004 (random citizens and special interest group citizens) and two focus groups on April 1, 2004 with youth and stakeholders. NSR then designed a mail-out citizen survey. The survey was designed based upon input from the focus groups, public meeting, city staff and task force members. A total of 7,000 surveys were mailed to citizens randomly. A total of 500 surveys were returned and computer tabulated, a 5% response rate. The margin of error of this sample size (500) at a 95% confidence level is plus or minus 4.5%. Additionally, a reduced version of the survey was completed by youth in Sugar Land. A total of 137 surveys were completed by youth. Results of the youth survey are included herein.

The citizen and teen survey, detailed survey tables and input from the public meeting and focus groups are presented in the Appendices of the technical volume report.

Three-fourths (71%) of Sugar Land citizens and 51% of teens who participated in the survey rated the parks, recreation opportunities and open space as excellent or good.

The Sugar Land Park and Recreation Department and the City newsletter are the most effective communication tools to create awareness about parks, recreation facilities and recreation programs in Sugar Land for citizens. Word of mouth is the most effective communication for teens.

68% of citizens and 93% of teens feel the City of Sugar Land should provide the facilities for a Recreation Center.

The top five facilities citizens want in the Recreation Center (in order of importance): exercise/aerobic/karate/dance room, gymnasium, indoor pool, senior area, and classrooms for programs. Teens want a gym, indoor pool, game/media room and rock climbing.

The top five recreation facilities citizens feel are most needed (in order of importance): hike/bike/jog/run trails, nature trails, open spaces, picnic areas/pavilions, and playgrounds. Teens want a youth/teen center, hike/bike/jog/run trails, water playgrounds, open space/natural areas, bike/inline skate trails, and an aquatic complex.

The top five athletic facilities citizens feel are most needed (in order of importance): basketball courts (indoor and outdoor), tennis courts, soccer fields and a competitive aquatics complex. Teens want indoor basketball, football fields, outdoor basketball, special use parks and practice athletic fields.

Corporate naming/sponsorships are clearly favored by citizens as a funding option for park and recreation improvements. Other funding mechanisms generally supported are user fees.

Citizens and teens are clearly in favor of any additional funds being spent on developing new parks and facilities.



STANDARDS ANALYSIS

The adequacy of existing parks, recreation facilities and open spaces is determined by comparing the needs of the present and forecasted populations of Sugar Land to specific goals and guidelines. This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan includes the guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) as included in the 1990 printing of Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines and the 1995 printing of Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. The NRPA guidelines have generally been the most widely accepted and used guidelines of their type, especially by local governments. This section includes a comparison of Sugar Land to national guidelines based upon park acreage per population.

Criteria for Guidelines

The most common standards for park planning guidelines, as recognized by park and recreation professionals, are the published guidelines by the NRPA. As written in the introduction, the NRPA recognizes the importance of establishing and using park and recreation guidelines as:

- A national expression of minimum acceptable facilities for the citizens of urban and rural communities.
- A guideline to determine land requirements for various kinds of park and recreation areas and facilities.
- A basis for relating recreation needs to spatial analysis within a community wide system of parks and open space areas.
- One of the major structuring elements that can be used to guide and assist regional development.
- A means to justify the need for parks and open space within the overall land use pattern of a region or community.

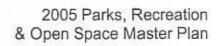
The purpose of this document is to present park and recreation space guidelines that are applicable for planning, acquisition, and development of parks, recreation, and open space lands, at the community level. These guidelines should be viewed as a guide. They address minimum, not maximum,

goals to be achieved. The guidelines are to be coupled with conventional wisdom and judgement relating to the particular situation to which they are applied and specific local needs.

Comparison of City of Sugar Land Park Land Acreage and NRPA Guidelines

Based upon the NRPA standards for each of the previous park classifications, the recommended park acreage per 1,000 population ranges from 11.00 to 20.00 acres. The City of Sugar Land includes a total of 896.30 acres for a ratio of 12.86 acres per 1,000 population at its current population of 69,720 in 2004. The tables on the following pages summarize the NRPA acreage standards and the standards applied to the existing park land in Sugar Land.

Mini-Park		0.00
Neighborhood	Colony Bend Park	5.00
-	Covington West Park	.50
	Highlands Park	5.00
	Lonnie Green Park	2.00
	Macco Park	7.20
	Mayfield Park	1.50
	Meadow Lake Park	5.10
	Ron Slockett Memorial Park	8.60
	Sugar Lakes Park	3.60
	Sugar Mill Park	5.30
	Thomas L. James Park	.50
		44.30
Community	City Park	19.90
######################################	Eldridge Park	43.00
	First Colony Park	21.30
	Imperial Park	41.00
	Lost Creek Park	21.00
	Oyster Creek Park	108.00
		254.20
Regional Park	Brazos River Corridor	529.00
	Duhacsek	49.00
		578.00
Special Use Areas	Sugar Land Community Center	1.80
Greenways/ Linear Parks		0.00
Natural Resource Areas	Gannoway Lake Property	18.00
	TOTAL PARK ACREAGES	896.30







NRPA PARK ACREAGE GUIDELINES APPLIED TO SUGAR LAND PARK LAND

Park Facility	Existing Acreage	NRPA Guidelines for 2004 Population of 69,720 ^A	NRPA Guidelines for Projected 2010 Population of 82,796 ^A		
		Range in Acres	Range in Acres		
Mini Parks	0.00	785 7 =	42		
Neighborhood	44.30	69.72 ac. to 139.44 ac.	82.80 ac. to 165.60 ac.		
Community Parks	254.20	348.60 ac. to 557.76 ac.	413.98 ac. to 662.37 ac.		
Regional Park	578.00	348.60 ac, to 697.20 ac.	413.98 ac. to 827.96 ac.		
Special Use Areas	1.80	Varies	Varies		
Greenways/ Linear Parks	0.00	Varies	Varies		
Natural Resource Areas	18.00	Varies	Varies		
TOTALS	896.30	766.92 ac. to 1,394.40 ac.	910.76 ac. to 1,655.93 ac.		

A. Population numbers provided by City of Sugar Land.



NRPA PARK ACREAGE GUIDELINES COMPARED TO 2004 POPULATION IN SUGAR LAND

	Existing Acreage	NRPA Guidelines for 2004 Population of 69,720 ^A	Difference Between NRPA Guidelines and Existing Sugar Land Parks	
		Range in Acres	Range in Acres	
Mini Parks	0.00		-	
Neighborhood	44.30	69.72 ac. to 139.44 ac.	(-25.42 ac.) to (-95.14 ac.)	
Community Parks	254.20	348.60 ac. to 557.76 ac.	(-94.40 ac.) to (-303.56 ac.)	
Regional Park	578.00	348.60 ac. to 697.20 ac.	+229.40 ac. to (-119.20 ac.)	
Special Use Areas	1.80	Varies	+1.80 ac.	
Greenways/ Linear Parks	0.00	Varies	Varies	
Natural Resource Areas	18.00	Varies	+18.00 ac.	
TOTALS	896.30	766.92 ac. to 1,394.40 ac.	+129.38 ac. to (-498.10 ac.)	

Population numbers provided by City of Sugar Land.



NRPA PARK ACREAGE GUIDELINES COMPARED TO 2010 POPULATION IN SUGAR LAND

	Existing Acreage	NRPA Guidelines for 2010 Population of 82,796 ^A	Difference Between NRPA Guidelines and Existing Sugar Land Parks	
		Range in Acres	Range in Acres	
Mini Parks	0.00		*	
Neighborhood	44.30	82.80 ac. to 165.60 ac.	(-38.50 ac.) to (-121.30 ac.)	
Community Parks	254.20	413.98 ac. to 662.37 ac.	(-159.78 ac.) to (-408.17 ac.)	
Regional Park	578.00	413.98 ac. to 827.96 ac.	164.02 ac. to (-249.96 ac.)	
Special Use Areas	1.80	Varies	+1.80	
Greenways/ Linear Parks	0.00	Varies	Varies	
Natural Resource Areas	18.00	Varies	+18.00 ac.	
TOTALS	896.30	910.76 ac. to 1,655.93 ac.	(-14.46 ac.) to (-759.63 ac.)	

Population numbers provided by City of Sugar Land.



Local Facility Development Guidelines Applied to the City of Sugar Land

Activity / Facility	Recommended Facilities Per Population	Existing City Facilities in Sugar Land	Existing HOA Facilities in Sugar Land and E.T.J.	Recommended Facilities for 2004 City Population of 69,720 ^A	Recommended Facilities for Projected City Population of 82,796 * in 2010	Recommended Facilities Needed to Fill Gap for Projected City Population in 2010	Standards For a Projected City/ETJ Population of 129,557 in 2010
Amphitheatre	1 per 50,000 ^b	1	0	1	2	1	3
Baseball (youth)	1 per 7,000 ⁸	14	4	10	12	0	18
Baseball (practice)	1 per 10,500 ^E	3	3	7	8	2	12
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	1 per 4,000 ⁸	3	4	17	21	8	32
Football Fields	1 per 20,000 ⁸	0	2	3	4	2	7
Golf Course	1 per 50,000 ⁸	0	4	1	2	0	3
Picnic Shelter	1 per 4,000 ⁸	16	16	17	21	5	32
Picnic Pavilion (Rental/Group) (200 person or larger)	1 per 20,000 ^c	0	0	3	4	4	7
Picnic Tables	1 table per 300 ^c	115	(not available)	232	276	170	432
Playgrounds	1 area per 3,000 ⁸	16	53	23	28	8	43
Recreation Center	1 sq. ft. per person	0	1	+/- 70,000 s.f.	+/- 83,000 s.f.	50,000 s.f.	130,000 s.f.
Soccer Fields (league)	1 per 5,000 ^B	19	9	14	17	8	26
Soccer Fields (practice)	1 per 7,500 ⁶	4	0	9	11	7	17
Softball Fields (adult)	1 per 8,000 ⁶	0	3	9	10	4	16
Softball Fields (youth)	1 per 5,000 ⁸	9	0	14	17	2	26
Softball Fields (practice)	1 per 7,500 ^E	3	3	9	11	6	17
Swimming Pool (community)	1 per 20,000 ^c	1.	65*	3	4	0	7
Swimming Pool (family aquatics)	1 per 50,000 ^c	0	1	1	2	1	3



2005 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

Activity / Facility	Recommended Facilities Per Population	Existing City Facilities in Sugar Land	Existing HOA Facilities In Sugar Land and E.T.J.	Recommended Facilities for 2004 City Population of 69,720 ⁴	Recommended Facilities for Projected City Population of 82,796 hin 2010	Recommended Facilities Needed to Fill Gap for Projected City Population in 2010	Standards For a Projected City/ETJ Population of 129,557 in 2010
Tennis Courts	1 court per 4, 000 ⁸	5	60	17	21	0	32
Trails (Hard)	1 mile 4,000 ^c	10.55 miles	(not available)	17.43 miles	20.70 miles	9 miles	32.39 miles
Trails (Soft)	1 mile per 10,000 ^c	0	(not available)	6.97 miles	8.28 miles	9 miles	12.96 miles
Volleyball Areas (hard court)	1 per 7,000 ^c	0	0	10	12	3	19
Volleyball Areas (sand court)	1 per 5,000 ^a	9	- 11	14	17	0	26

A.

Population number provided by City of Sugar Land. Development Standards from Dallas PARD Long Range Development Plan.

C. D. Development Standards from Frisco Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

Development Standards from Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, pp. 73-74 (1990).

Consultant recommendation based on years of park planning/design experience. Practice facilities should average approximately 1.5

times the amount of league facilities.

^{*}Includes small and large pools at each HOA Center



RECOMMENDATIONS/ PRIORITIES FOR MASTER PLAN

The recommendations and priorities in this section are a result of incorporating the inventory, demographics analysis, benchmark survey, program analysis, other service provider analysis, standards analysis, and needs assessment into an action plan to direct the growth, development, and maintenance of the parks system over for the next five to ten years. The recommendations are based upon an existing population of 69,720 in 2004 and a projected population of 82,796 in 2010.

Priority Summary

At the completion of the citizen survey during the needs assessment phase, a method of ranking priorities was implemented. This method included an extensive review of all standards, citizen input, and staff recommendations. The following factors were considered in order of importance with weighted values assigned to each:

- Citizen Input/Survey Results (75%) – The specific needs and requests by the Sugar Land community.
- Youth Input/Survey Results (25%) – Specific needs as identified by Sugar Land Youth.

A total of 500 citizen survey samples, and a total of 137 youth surveys were received for processing. The youth survey's represented approximately 25% of the total responses, and were given a 25% weighted value when determining the priority ranking.

The results of the priority ranking were tabulated into three categories: High Priority, Moderate Priority, and Low Priority. The table on the following page provides a summary of the facility priorities for the City of Sugar Land.

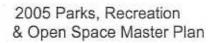
Addressing the priorities will be impacted by limited resources, relative costs, and estimated costs.

Additional text will be added to the plan's implementation section as follows:
The Master Plan recommends proposed implementation from 1-10 years. It identifies needs and suggests priorities as well as estimates for capital, operations and maintenance cost impacts. The Master Plan is reviewed and approved by the Parks Advisory Board, Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council.

The 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) plan that is adopted by City Council on an annual basis identifies projects, estimated cost impacts, schedules, and funding sources. The City Council bases the adoption of the plan based on knowledge of the fiscal forecast's constraints.

The fiscal forecast for parks projects and programs is based on the following sources:

- Sugar Land 4B Corporation .025cent sales tax revenue for quality of life enhancements. There is an annual budgeting process and has 4B Board and City Council approval.
- Bonds There are funds authorized from a 1999 bond election. New bonds would require citizen input and a bond election. The City has a history of not allowing bond elections to adversely affect the ad velorum tax rate.
- Grants/Sponsorships/Partnerships –
 The City can assist the funding of
 parks by actively pursuing alternate
 funding sources. Grant writing
 assistance by consultant services or
 by city staff position is encouraged
 by the Parks Advisory Board.







2005 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

SUMMARY OF FACILITY PRIORITY ITEMS

Sugar Land Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

Facility		High	Moderate	Low
1.	Recreation Center Exercise/Aerobic/Karate/Dance Room Gymnasium Teen Area Senior Citizen Area Classrooms for Programs Game/Media Rooms Basketball Courts (Indoor) Indoor Track Meeting Rooms Computer Labs Cooking/Kitchen Facilities Arts and Crafts Room Indoor Volleyball Rock Climbing Wall	•		
2.	Trails Trails – Hike/Bike/Walk/Jog/Run Nature/Greenway Corridor Bike and In-Line Skate Only Fitness Stations Along Trails Equestrian			
3.	Open Spaces/Natural Areas			
4.	Picnic Areas/Pavilions			
5.	Playgrounds for Children			
6.	Youth/Teen Center			
7.	Small Amphitheater (Seats 10,000)			
8.	Special Events/Festival Facilities			
9.	Water Playgrounds			
10.	Aquatic Complex			
11.	Senior Center			
12.	Nature Center			
13.	Canoe Launches on Brazos River			
14.	Cultural Arts Center • Public Art/Sculptures		•	
15.	Basketball Courts (Outdoor)		3 .	
16.	Tennis Courts			
17.	Large Amphitheater (Seats 20,000)			



2005 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

Facility		High	Moderate	Low
18.	Soccer Fields	-		
19.	Competitive Aquatics Complex			
20.	Special Use Parks (Skate Boarding/Inline Skates/BMX)			
21.	Practice Athletic Fields			
22.	Softball Fields		•	
23.	Baseball Fields			
24.	Sand Volleyball Courts			
25.	Dog Park			
26.	Multi-Purpose Fields			
27.	Community/Botanic/Chinese Garden			
37.	Football Fields			
38.	Racquetball			
39.	Disc Golf			



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LAND ACQUISITION

The City of Sugar Land, and its EJT areas, are growing at a rapid pace. The community is very unique in the amount of private recreation areas that have been developed, and will continue to be planned. As development and population numbers continue to increase, the demand for quality parks, leisure services, facilities and open spaces will continue to increase.

Based on National Recreation and Park Association acreage guidelines, the recommended park acreage per 1,000 population ranges from 11.00 to 20.00 acres (see page 114). The City of Sugar Land currently owns 896.30 acres of park land for a ratio of 12.86 acres per 1,000 population based on a current population of 69,720.

As the population grows, so must the inventory of park land to keep up with demand. The projected population in Sugar Land is expected to rise to 82,796 residents by the year 2010.

In order to meet the high end NRPA park acreage guideline for the year 2010, the City would need to acquire approximately 760 acres of new park land (see page 117).

It is important to note that many of the private HOA facilities are located within the city limits. These facilities, though not available to all, do serve to provide recreation and park amenities to Sugar Land residents at the local neighborhood level. When analyzing the private recreation and open spaces throughout the City, there are 37 areas for a total of 77.84 acres which serve parts of the community not already covered within the service radius of a neighborhood park. The following analysis of land acquisition needs considers the private recreation and open space areas:

NRPA Guidelines Compared To 2010 Population in Sugar Land

Existing Park Acreage in Sugar Land	Guidelines for 2010 Population of 82,796	Difference Between Guidelines and Existing Acreage
896.30	910.76 ac to 1,655.93 ac.	(-14.46 ac.) to (-759.63 ac.)

(refer to Standards Analysis, page 117)

+759.63	(gross acreage needs based on 2010 population of 82,796)
-77.84	(existing private HOA recreation and open space)
681.79	(future acres needed to meet 2010 NRPA guidelines)

This analysis shows that private recreation and open spaces contribute to the supply of smaller localized park facilities across the community of Sugar Land. Gaps still exist in the larger community park and regional park service areas of City owned parks across the community. (Refer to map page 118)

These types of parks, and associated activities, are still a major priority for land acquisition.

The Sugar Land Park and Recreation Department has been proactive in identifying future park dedications and future land acquisition targets within the City. The following list outlines future proposed acquisitions:

Approximate Acres	Future Park Dedications and Land Acquisition Targets		
135	Greatwood Development – Brazos River Flood Way		
189	River Park Development – Brazos River Flood Way		
320	Riverstone Development – Brazos River Flood Way		
60 - 100	Acquire land west of the existing Gannoway Lake Park property to establish a community level park with particular emphasis on trails, picnicking and water access for fishing. This park sight will address the Park and Recreation needs of existing neighborhoods along Burney Road and future neighborhoods on the TxDOT Tract 3 Area (budgeted)		



Approximate Acres	Future Park Dedications and Land Acquisition Targets		
25 - 50	Identify and acquire land in the southeast sector of the City for a community level park to address residential growth in the Riverstone Development (not budgeted)		
50 - 75	Acquire property identified in the Newland Communities Development Agreement to serve new residential development in the west sector of the City (budgeted) Investigate opportunities an consider acquisition of the former Prison Infirmary Building that exists on the Newland Development site		
50	Acquire through a long term ground lease, approximately 50 acres from the University of Houston for recreational facilities use (not budgeted)		
2,000	Acquire Brazos River floodway property through donation, purchase, easements or condemnation to complete the identified Brazos River Park (not budgeted)		
5	Acquire the approximately 5-acre tract from SPI located on the southeast corner of Settlers Way and Sam Houston Drive		
3-5	Identify and consider acquiring land for a neighborhood level park to serve the Sugar Creek subdivision area (not budgeted)		
2 - 4.5	Property adjacent to Oyster Creek Park to allow for better access and overflow parking (not budgeted)		
To Be Determined	Identify and consider property adjacent to Mayfield Neighborhood Park		
2,839.00 - 2,933.50	Total Proposed Future Acquisitions		

The acquisition and development of these proposed areas will help the community of Sugar Land meet and exceed the benchmark guidelines developed by NRPA, and address the recreation needs of the community as it grows with the planned annexations and buildout of new residential development.



2005 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

	ACTION PLAN						
Rank	Facility/Need	Proposed Location	Capital Costs Estimate	Annual Operations/ Maintenance Cost Estimates	Year To Be Expended		
HIGH	PRIORITY ITEMS		*				
1.	Recreation Center	University of Houston	\$4,800,000	\$400,000 - \$500,000/year	1-5		
2.	Trails (9 mile hard trail, 9 miles soft trail recommended)	Develop Trail Master Plan Update	\$4,500,000	\$22,500/year	1-10		
3.	Open Spaces/Natural Areas	Brazos River Gannoway Lake New Land properties Greatwood Park River Park Riverstone	\$9,325,000 - \$12,632,500	\$5,000 per 10 Acres /year	1-10		
4.	Picnic Areas/Pavilions (5 new shelters recommended)	Duhacsek Park Brazos River Corridor Gannoway Lake Greatwood Park River Park Riverstone	Small: \$400,000 to Large: \$1,400,000	\$6,250/year	1-10		



2005 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

824		ACTION PL	AN		
Rank	Facility/Need	Proposed Location	Capital Costs Estimate	Annual Operations/ Maintenance Cost Estimates	Year To Be Expended
HIGH F	PRIORITY ITEMS				(ii)
5.	Playgrounds (8 new playgrounds recommended)	Upgrade: Mayfield Park Highlands Park Covington West Park New: Duhacsek Park Brazos Landing Park Brazos River Corridor Gannoway Lake Greatwood Park River Park Riverstone	Upgrades: \$210,000 New: \$1,000,000	\$5,600.00/year	1-10
6.	Youth/Teen Center	(Included in Rec Center)	(Included in Rec Center)	Included in Rec Center	1-5
7.	Small Amphitheater (50 events per year)	University of Houston Brazos River Corridor	\$1,000,000	\$30,000/year	1-10
8.	Special Event/Festival Facilities (10 events per year)	University of Houston	\$1,000,000	\$15,000/year	1-10
9.	Water Playgrounds (2 new water playgrounds recommended)	City Park Brazos River Corridor Newly Developed Parks	\$400,000 — \$800,000	\$10,000/year	1-10
10.	Aquatic Complex	Implement an Aquatic Study	\$6,000,000	\$300,000/year	1-5
11.	Senior Center	(Included in Rec Center)	(Included in Rec Center)	Included in Rec Center	1-10
		TOTAL Capital Expenditure Estimate at Completion of Plan:	\$19,060,000 - \$23,00,000	\$1,244,350.00 Total Annual O&M Cost Estimate at Completion of Plan	